6.

THE Genuine Use and Necessity OF THE Two Sacraments, NAMELY BAPTISM, AND THE Lord's Supper.

WITH OUR Obligation Frequently TO Receive the Latter.

By Lancelot Addy a Dean of Rochfield.

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BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

TO THE

Right Worſhipful *George Bohun* Eſq;

Governour of the Honourable *Eaſt-India* Company.

THE following Diſcourſe is Affectionately Addreſs'd by L. A. D. *of* Lichfield; *gratefully acknowledging his ſteady Friendſhip, and juſtly Honouring his great Integrity.*

THE BOOKSELLER TO THE READER.

THE Author of this ſmall Tract, taking care that (according to Rubrick*) the Communion be Celebrated every Sunday in the Cathedral to which he belongs; it is his hearty Deſire that Parochial Churches wou'd come up to a proportionable frequency. And that as Cathedrals have advanc'd to the*

To the Reader.

Primitive Practice of weekly Sacraments, so they, as far as is morally possible, wou'd do the like. And in hopes that the Ensuing Discourse may contribute to this purpose, he has given me leave to make it Publick.

SIR,

SIR,

YOU are taught by your firſt Catechiſm, That the two Sacraments, which Chriſt Ordained in his Church, as only and generally neceſſary to Salvation, are Baptiſm and the Supper of the Lord. And it is commonly held, that they were typified in that Blood and Water which flow'd out of Chriſt's Wound, when one of the Soldiers pierc'd his Side with a Spear. And our own Church ſeems to favour and have reſpect to this Opinion, when in her Miniſtration of Publick Baptiſm, ſhe ſaith, *That for the forgiveneſs of our Sins, Chriſt ſhed out of his moſt precious Side both Water and Blood.* By the Water was ſignified the Sacrament of Baptiſm, in which the Guilt of Original Sin is waſht away, and you are admitted

to be a Member of Chriſt's Family, the Church; In which while you continue, firmly believing in, and obeying him, you cannot miſs of that Inheritance in Heaven, to which by Baptiſm you are intitled. And by the Blood that guſht out of Chriſt's wounded Side, the Sacrament of his Death was likewiſe ſignified.

But not to ſpend time in taking notice of the nicer Obſervations that have been made in this Matter, as not ſo proper to ſerve the ends deſign'd in this Diſcourſe, it may ſuffice only to remark, That the two Sacraments which Chriſt Inſtituted when alive, were by a wonderful providence ratified and confirm'd at his Death: From which you may conclude the great importance of the Sacraments, and the great care you are to take to have a thorough and clear Underſtanding of them. And in order to this latter, you are firſt to inform your ſelf of the Uſe and Neceſſity of Sacraments in general.

Now,

Now, the Uſe and Neceſſity of any Inſtitution, whether Divine or Humane, is chiefly to be gather'd from the end thereof. And if that be either unknown, or miſtaken, the Inſtitution it ſelf may be eaſily perverted, and ſo become of little or no effect. That the Holy Sacraments are not ſecure from having a wrong end aſſign'd them, you may learn from their Doctrine who pretending to ſet forth the uſe of the Sacraments, hold that they were appointed for no other end, but only to teach you by ſeeing that which the Word does by hearing. So that according to theſe Mens Sentiments, Baptiſm, or the waſhing or ſprinkling of the Perſon with Water, ſerves only to teach you by the eye, how Original Sin is waſht away with the Blood of Chriſt. And in the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper, when you behold the breaking of the Bread, and the pouring out of the Wine, you are taught by your Senſe of ſeeing, to diſcern how cru-

elly the Lord's Body was handl'd upon the Croſs, when he died to take away your Sins. So that all thoſe ſolemn and ſacred Actions, which are uſed at the Conſecration of the Lord's-Supper, ſerve only (as ſome Dream) to create in you a Remembrance of Chriſt's Sufferings, and how his moſt Bleſſed Body was tormented on the Croſs.

But if Inſtruction be the only end of Sacraments, and the only Benefit to be reap'd by them, then hearing the Word will attain this end without any Participation of Sacraments: For by that, without this, you may learn as much as you need concerning them. And if there be no other end to be aſſign'd unto the uſe of Sacraments, but only Inſtruction, then you need not wonder to ſee ſome ſo affectionately oppoſing the Baptizing of Infants, and excluding all but the Adult from that Sacrament, becauſe none but they are capable of receiving inſtruction by it. *That the Sa-*

craments

craments are adminiſtred only to teach Receivers what God doth for them, and that this may be done as well by hearing the Word, as by Communicating of the Sacraments, tho' it be a very groundleſs Opinion, yet it ſeems to be very prevailing, eſpecially with thoſe Perſons who prefer the hearing of a Sermon before the Receiving of the Sacrament, and who could be content to be alway drowſily ſitting under the Pulpit, but care not if they never devoutly kneel before the Lord's Table.

And now it being reaſonable to preſume that that Neglect and Diſregard, which not a few have of the Holy Sacraments, is in a great meaſure imputable to the aſſigning of them a wrong End; I ſhall endeavour to ſhew you, That there is a more Excellent and Heavenly uſe of Sacraments, than barely to teach you what God does for Believers.

And here it will not be unſeaſonable to conſider, *That the Sacraments being of a mixt Nature, are more di-*

verſly

verſly interpreted and diſputed of, than any other part of Religion. And, that albeit there is great diverſity of Opinions concerning the Nature and Neceſſity of Sacraments, yet there is a conſiderable Harmony among pious and thinking Men in the main Particulars that concern them.

For all agree,

Firſt, *That they ſerve as Bonds of Obedience unto God; and that they are ſtrict Obligations to the mutual Exerciſe of Chriſtian Charity; powerful helps and arguments to a ſteady and conſtant Godlineſs; happy reſtraints, and preſervations from Sin, and ſtanding Memorials of the principal benefits which we receive from Chriſt.*

Secondly, All likewiſe agree that the Sacraments were not intended to be temporary and tranſient, but that God has annext them for ever to the New Teſtament, as he did other Rites before them to the Old. For as Circumciſion

cumciſion and the Paſſover laſted till the Ceremonial Law was abolisht, ſo Baptiſm and the Lord's-Supper, which came in their place, ſhall continue as long as the Goſpel, that is, unto the end of the World.

Thirdly, There is further a general agreement, That the Sacraments are marks of Diſtinction to ſeparate Gods Domeſticks from Strangers, or Chriſtians from Men of all other Religions in the World. And tho' theſe things plainly declare the neceſſity of Sacraments, and that they are to be made uſe of for other Ends, than meerly to inſtruct what God does for you, yet it ſtill remains to conſider; *That the chief force and vertue of Sacraments conſiſts in being thoſe Heavenly Inſtitutions which God has ſanctified and appointed to be Adminiſtred in his Church, and to ſerve as Conditional means, which he requires they ſhou'd uſe, to whom he imparts that ſaving Grace, which he is willing to beſtow on all who duly obſerve the Conditions on*

which

which he has promis'd to beſtow it. Now, the Sacraments are the Conditions on which God has promis'd to beſtow his Saving Grace, ſo that unleſs you partake of the Sacraments, God in his uſual Courſe will not convey unto you his Saving Grace. And therefore if you would have Saving Grace convey'd unto your Soul, you muſt receive the Sacraments as the ordinary appointed means of its conveyance. For it is by Sacraments that God ſeverally derives his Saving Grace unto every Member of his Family, the Church. God is inviſible, and you cannot diſcern his immediate Workings; ſo that when it ſeems good to his Heavenly Wiſdom, that for ſome great End, Men ſhou'd take notice of his Preſence, he gives them ſome plain and ſenſible Token whereby to know it.

It was impoſſible for *Moſes* to ſee God and live, yet God was pleas'd *Moſes* ſhou'd know that he was in an extraordinary manner preſent in the Buſh

Buſh that burn'd with Fire, and was not conſum'd. None ever ſaw the Angel by whom God indued the Waters of the Houſe of Mercy with Supernatural vertue to heal, yet the time of the Angels preſence was known by the troubled motions of the Waters themſelves. And when the Apoſtles ſaw the fiery Tongues, they were admoniſh'd that the Holy Ghoſt was upon them, tho' in himſelf he was then and is ſtill inviſible. In like manner it is with you and every true Believer; Chriſt and his Holy Spirit, with all their bleſſed Effects, enter your Soul, and tho' you are not able to apprehend and expreſs how they enter, yet they give notice of the times when they enter; and God is pleas'd by ſenſible means to Communicate thoſe Bleſſings, by a way that is inſenſible. Vital Saving Grace is that you muſt have, or Periſh, and the Sacraments are the appointed means to convey it to you. For Grace is a genuine effect, and

conſequent

conſequent of Sacraments, when they are rightly Adminiſtred, and worthily receiv'd. But this Benefit comes not from any natural quality in the Sacraments, for in themſelves they have no vital force or efficacy, as being not Phyſical but Moral, and ſupernatural inſtruments of Salvation, and duties of Service and Worſhip; which are only profitable as being perform'd according to God's Command. The Grace and Benefit you receive by them is from God himſelf, who is the only Author of Sacraments, and who is pleas'd to beſtow the Grace accompanying them on all by whom they are duly receiv'd. For of the Sacraments, the ſame is true, which *Solomon*'s Wiſdom obſerves of the Braſen Serpent; He that turn'd towards it, was not ſav'd by the thing that he ſaw, but by thee, O God, who art the Saviour of all.

Chriſt, by his Sacraments, derives Grace to every true Member of the Church; and he has appointed them as

as inſtruments for that end; but as 'twas ſaid, they are Moral inſtruments, the Uſe whereof is in your own power, but the Effect and Benefit in God's: Who has Commanded you to receive them, and promis'd to bleſs you, if you receive them aright. The Sacraments are effectual means whereby God delivers into your hands that Grace which is available unto Eternal Life. Which Grace is repreſented by the Sacraments, and by them convey'd unto all, by whom they are worthily receiv'd.

If then you neglect the Sacraments, you neglect the proper means of Grace and Salvation, you deſpiſe God's Ordinance, and diſobey his precepts, and will not uſe the ordinary means of your going to Heaven, and by doing this, you run a manifeſt hazard of loſing your Soul for ever. 'Tis true, God by his prerogative may ſave, if he pleaſes without Sacraments, but according to his ordinary courſe of ſaving, he has made the

the Sacraments neceſſary to Salvation. For by means of them you are made partakers of the ſaving Grace of Chriſt, and of all the benefits of his Death, without which, there is no room for hope of Salvation. None but ſuch as are members of Chriſt and Children of God, can in the ordinary method of Divine diſpenſation be inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven; and none can attain to theſe but by Holy Baptiſm, for they are privileges and benefits peculiar to that Sacrament; in which that Grace is begun which the Lord's Supper doth both nouriſh and finiſh. And as you can naturally be but once Born, but daily need to be fed and nouriſh'd; ſo you can be but once Baptized or ſpiritually Born anew and regenerate. But you have need frequently to be fed at the Lord's Table, and to have your Soul nouriſhed and refreſhed with the Body and Blood of Chriſt, as your Body is to be nouriſh'd and refreſh'd with daily food.

Baptiſm

Baptiſm is the firſt beginner of life, and cannot be repeated; but in the Euchariſt you are to receive Chriſt often, for by continual degrees it does at laſt finiſh your ſpiritual Life. And both Sacraments are to be receiv'd by all whom God in his ordinary courſe will receive into Heaven: For both are ſubſervient to that end, Chriſt having ordained them to be the means whereby his own merits ſhou'd be convey'd to all Believers, unto the end of the World. Baptiſm was ever the rite of Matriculation and reception of Heathens into the Religion of the Jews. And by it *Jacob* admitted thoſe of *Shechem* and *Syria* into his Religion, when Circumciſion was become deadly in their eyes. And by the ſame rite *John* admitted the Jews into another Religion than their own, namely, the Chriſtian. And it might be prov'd out of the Jewiſh Writers, that Baptiſm was us'd for the admiſſion of Proſelytes into the Church, both Men,

Men, Women, and Children; And alſo that breaking of Bread and drinking of Wine, were ſacred rites in uſe many generations before the time of Chriſt; but it was he who inſtituted them for Sacraments; and appointed the one to enter you into the Chriſtian profeſſion, and the other therein to ſtrengthen and make you perfect.

And from this ſhort conſideration of the Sacraments in general, I now deſcend to give you a particular view of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And to do this with greater perſpicuity, I will firſt refer you to the Hiſtory and circumſtances of its inſtitution, as they are ſet down in the twenty ſecond Chapter of St. *Luke*; where you meet with one of the greateſt Revolutions that ever happen'd in Religion; to wit, the aboliſhing of the Paſſover, and, the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, which latter did not only ſucceed into the place of the former, but in many parti-

particularities bears an alluſion to it.

For *Firſt*, as the Paſſover, or Paſchal Supper, was Celebrated by every Jewiſh Family in memory of the deliverance of their Firſt-born, when thoſe of the *Egyptians* were deſtroy'd; and as at that divine Feſtival, the maſter of the Houſe took Bread, and preſented it before his houſhold, and brake it, and gave it to them, ſaying, *This is the Bread of Affliction which our Fathers eat in* Egypt. So in the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, Chriſt the Maſter of his houſhold, the Church, took Bread, and brake, and gave it unto them. Chriſt took ſay ſome, the very Loaf which the Jews were wont to take for the Paſſover, and did not cut it with knives, but according to the *Hebrew* manner, broke it with his Hands, and ſo gave it to his Diſciples, and ſaid, *This is my Body which is given for you*; where our Lord made a double alluſion to the Paſſover, one in the action there-

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in uſed, which was breaking and diſtributing the Loaf, the other in the manner of ſpeech, *This is my Body*. And as the Jews conſtantly call'd the Paſſover the Body of the Paſchal Lamb, ſo in alluſion thereunto Chriſt call'd the Bread his Body. The Paſchal Lamb was Chriſt's Body in Type and Figure, as you may ſee comparing *Exod.*12.46. with St. *John* 19. 36. And when our Saviour ſaid, *This is my Body*, the word, *this*, had reſpect to the Paſchal Lamb, which was but newly eaten, and which hitherto had been Sacramentally the Body of Chriſt to the Jews. But now when Jeſus took Bread and Bleſſed, and brake it, he told them that were preſent, *That this Bread henceforward was to be his Body under the Goſpel, in the ſame manner as the Paſchal Lamb had been his Body under the Law.*

Secondly, In the great, ſolemn and ancient Feaſt of the Paſſover, the maſter of the Family, when Supper was done, took a Cup, ſaying, *This is the*

the Fruit of the Vine, and the Blood of the Grape. To which alſo our Saviour had reference, when after Supper he took the Cup and gave it to his Diſciples, and ſaid, *This Cup is the New Teſtament in my Blood*; which expreſſion is the ſame that *Moſes* uſed when he ratified the ancient Covenant between God and the Jews, ſaying, *This is the Blood of the Teſtament.*

Thirdly, When the Jews had finiſhed the Sacred Feaſt of the Paſſover, they were wont to Sing an Hymn, which they called the great *Hallel*, becauſe it contain'd all the Pſalms from the 114. to the 119. And at the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, our Saviour and his Diſciples are expreſly recorded to have done the like; and it is very probable that they ſang the ſame Hymn that was ſung at the Paſſover.

Fourthly, The Jews were commanded to keep the Paſſover in memory of their deliverance from the Plagues and

and Bondage of *Egypt*: and when Chriſt ordain'd the ſecond Sacrament, it was thereby to continue the Remembrance of the Death he was about to ſuffer, and by which the whole race of Mankind was deliver'd from the ſore Bondage of Sin. And this we may conclude from that peremptory command which Chriſt left with his Church; *This do in Remembrance of me*, that is, Receive the Sacrament in memory of the Death which I am now going to ſuffer for you. And as often, ſaith the Apoſtle, *as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*, or, *Receive the Sacrament, ye ſhew forth the Lord's Death.* And as the Jews were ſtrictly to Teach their Children the meaning of the Paſſover, and how it was kept in memory of the great things which God had done for their Anceſtors; and as the *Haroſeth*, the bitter Herbs, and ſower Sauce, with which they us'd to eat the Paſchal Lamb, and the Red Wine they drank with it, put them in mind of the Cruel Servitude they underwent

went in *Egypt*, and of the Blood of the Children of *Iſrael* that was ſpilt by the *Egyptians*: ſo by the breaking of the Bread and pouring out of the Red Wine at the Holy Table, you are put in mind how Chriſt's Body was broken, and his Blood ſhed for your Salvation.

Now by theſe intimations you will be able to perceive, *That Chriſt in the Ordinance of his laſt Supper had an eye to the Paſchal Cuſtoms of the Jews, and that he applied to his Sacrament the form of Words uſed at the Paſſover:* And as he placed his laſt Supper in the room thereof, ſo he retain'd the circumſtances and modes of Speech that were thereat made uſe of; and if the Jews had not been willfully blind, they might have ſeen their Paſſover highly promoted in the Lord's Supper, and how it was chang'd to a more excellent memorial. For whereas the Paſſover was before a commemoration of the deliverance but of a ſingle Nation, being now chang'd into the

Sacrament, it is become the remembrance of the deliverace of all the Nations of the World. For Christ our Passover was sacrific'd for all Mankind, and was not a Lamb out of the Flock, but a Lamb from Heaven, and therefore call'd the Lamb of God. In whom were summ'd up and compleated all the Typical, Mosaick prescriptions of Lambs to be sacrificed, either daily, or at the Passover. And by his Death, he has obtain'd Pardon from God for that Sin that all the World is engag'd in, on condition that they reform according to the Gospel.

There is then (you see) a great and useful Conformity and Agreement betwixt the Paschal Supper, and the Supper of the Lord: And the right understanding of the former, does much contribute to the better knowing of the latter. And if this conformity had been timely and impartially taken notice of, it might have prevented that dividing controversie about

about the manner of Christ's Presence in the Sacrament, which has so long disturb'd the Peace of the Western Church. For if with unprejudiced Minds, those words of our Saviour (This is my Body) had been consider'd only as a form of Speech used by the Jews at their Paschal Supper, and applied by our Saviour to his Sacrament, we had never heard of any dispute concerning the manner of his Presence in that Divine Ordinance.

And here it will be no impertinent Digression to take notice of the singular moderation and temper which the Church of *England* (of which you are a steady worthy Member) has used in this particular. For tho' she utterly abhors, and declares against the unreasonable, senseless, and unnatural Doctrine of Transubstantiation; whereby (according to the Papists) *The Bread and Wine, the Elements of the Sacrament, are turn'd into the Natural Body and Blood of Christ*, yet

ſhe teaches her Members, *That the Body and Blood of Chriſt, are verily and indeed taken and receiv'd by the Faithful in the Lord's-Supper.* In which Words ſhe aſſerts, *The reality of Chriſt's Preſence in the Sacrament; and that he is there effectually, and really given and exhibited to all worthy Communicants; and that he does as effectually convey his Body and Blood, the Merits and Benefits of his Death and Paſſion, to the Souls of worthy Communicants by the Bread and Wine, as he did his Holy Spirit by his Breath to the Diſciples.* But then ſhe holds the manner of Chriſt's Preſence in the Sacrament to be Spiritual, myſterious and incomprehenſible. When the Apoſtle told the *Corinthians*, That the Chriſtian Feaſt of Bread and Wine in the Lord's-Supper, was the Exhibiting to them, and the making them partakers of the Body and Blood of Chriſt: He ſpoke nothing of the manner of Chriſt's Preſence therein, but left that as it is, to be a Myſtery.

And

And I am of Opinion, that it is your Duty ſiumbly to believe, rather than nicely to enquire into the manner of Chriſts being preſent in the Sacrament: And that you are not to be Curious and Scholaſtick in Senſeing his Words, *This is my Body*—but to believe that thereby he intended no carnal, groſs, unnatural meaning, but that they are Spirit, Life, and Supernatural. And it is ſufficient for you to believe, that if you come worthily to the Sacrament, you ſhall effectually receive Chriſt's moſt precious Body and Blood: And that he will be preſent with you in that his own Myſtical Ordinance; and alway with you in the Comforts, Directions, and Aſſiſtances of his Spirit, to enable you to bring the good purpoſes wherewith you come to the Holy Sacrament, to good effect; if you do not quench, grieve, and reſiſt him. You need not then diſquiet your ſelf about the manner of Chriſt's Preſence in the Sacrament, becauſe after your

beſt enquiry, you will find it to be incomprehenſible. Nor ought it to leſſen, but inhanſe your Reverence and Eſteem for the Sacrament, that the manner of Chriſt's Preſence in it is incomprehenſible. For there is not one end for which the Sacrament was Inſtituted, that may not be attain'd by believing Chriſt therein to be preſent, without expreſsly determining the manner of his Preſence.

That then, which in this caſe, I would adviſe you, is, not to follow the inſtigation of a bold Reaſoning, but the conduct of an humble Faith; which never ſo properly exerts its genuine Energy, and vigor, as about the things which your Reaſon is not able to reach. And it is by the Eye of this Divine Grace, which is the evidence of things not ſeen, and a being convinc'd of the truth of that whereof there is no ocular or ſenſible Demonſtration, that you diſcern the Lord's Body: That the ſacred, ſignificant actions uſed at the Holy Table,

Table, beget in you a lively remembrance of Christ's Sufferings; How his Blessed Body was Scourg'd, Wounded, Bruised and Tormented, and how his most precious Blood was shed for you.

On this, your Thoughts should chiefly be imploy'd, as being most proper to rouse your Powers, and set them on work to inflame your Love to him, and to celebrate his Love to you. The Consideration of what he suffer'd to expiate your Sins, must needs move you to desire and pant after him, to praise and adore his Goodness; to have a Seraphic delight in his gracious Presence; and with Joy and Triumph to receive him into your Heart, and there with pure and constant Affection to entertain him.

When you resolve with your self how Christ has not only lov'd you so well as to Die for your sake, but does still refresh your memory of his Death in the Sacrament; and is there pleased to be ineffably present with you;

and by it, to convey and ſeal unto your Soul the benefits of his Paſſion, when I ſay you think on this as you ought; you will be ſenſible of freſh Ardours ariſing in your Heart, and feel new Tranſports of Love and Comfort in your Mind: And it will be your greateſt delight to pleaſe, and your greateſt torment to offend him. And upon a ſerious and ſteady entertainment of theſe Thoughts, I can eaſily imagine you haſtening to the Myſtick Banquet, and there lifting up your Heart, even lifting it up unto the Lord, and ſaying,

O Crucified Creator, O merciful Saviour, Almighty Advocate! let that immortal Food, which thou vouchſafeſt me at thy Heavenly Table, inſtill into my weak languiſhing Soul, new ſupplies of Grace, new Life, new Love, new Strength, and new Reſolutions, that I may never more faint, or droop, or tire in my Purpoſes to perform that Baptiſmal Vow which I now come at thy laſt Supper ſolemnly to renew. It

It is a great vouchſafement, and an infinitely condeſcending Goodneſs in God, ſo graciouſly and often to invite you to his own Table: Where, as ſurely as you worthily receive the outward viſible Signs, the Elements of Bread and Wine, you receive inward and ſpiritual Grace, Chriſt and the Pledges of his Love to you, to quicken up your Love to him. *And may that Almighty Being, who is the only ſearcher of Hearts, and who knows the Impiety and Guilt that lies heavy upon the Conſcience, may he help you ſo to ſearch your Heart when you come to the Holy Sacrament, that you may leave no Sin either undiſcovered or unrepented of.*

If you once duly weigh the frequent Opportunities that you have of coming to the Lord's Table, you will value it as one of the greateſt Bleſſings you can enjoy on this ſide Heaven: For there you receive him who alone can bring you thither. For in the Sacrament, the Body of Chriſt is

given, taken and eaten, after an Heavenly and Spiritual manner, by the means of Faith. And to have frequent Opportunities of doing this, is a benefit and privilege which neither Popery, nor Phanaticiſm grants to their deluded Votaries.

For as to Popery, you well know, that it has brought the Receiving of the Lord's-Supper by the Laity to but once a Year. And even then they are admitted but to a half Communion; for the Cup is denied them in flat contradiction to the mind and appointment of Chriſt.

And as to Phanaticiſm, when it had the upper hand in this Nation, in the time of the great Rebellion, this Divine Ordinance was ſo irreligiouſly neglected, that for Thirteen or Fourteen Years together, ſeveral Pariſhes never ſo much as heard whether there was any ſuch thing as the Lord's-Supper.

But the Church to which you belong, has more care and tenderneſs

for

for thoſe of her Communion, than either wholly to with-hold, or, but ſparingly to adminiſter the Sacrament to them. For when ever they are Devoutly and Religiouſly diſpos'd to receive it, ſhe is ready to adminiſter: And ſhe makes it the Badge and Cognizance of her genuine Children to be duly and often at Chriſt's laſt Supper. And it is none of the leaſt Ornaments, Bleſſings and Privileges of our Religion, that in all our Cathedrals, where the Rubrick is obſerv'd, there is a Prieſt Officiating every Lord's Day at the Lord's Table, and ready to deliver the Conſecrated Symbols to the Penitent and Devout. And the like, no doubt, wou'd be done in all Parochial Churches, if the Miniſters cou'd be ſure of a competent number of Communicants.

'Tis certain, none can be too often at the Holy Table, becauſe none can be too often put in mind of that univerſal Charity Chriſt expreſs'd in his Death, and of that mutual Love which

which ought to be among all that bear his Name. The Sacrament is not only a Badge and Mark of Chriſtianity, and a ſure witneſs, and an effectual ſign of Grace, and of the divine Goodneſs; but it is alſo that by which God works inviſibly in thoſe who rightly receive it: And does not only quicken, but confirm their Faith in him. And it has ever been eſteem'd neceſſary, both to a Chriſtians growth in Religion, after he had been thereunto admitted by Baptiſm; and alſo to recover the benefits of Baptiſm, after he has forfeited them by breach of that Vow which he therein made unto God.

And you have no other means whereby you may renew your Vow of Baptiſm, and regain the benefits of that Sacrament after you have loſt them; but by a worthy Communicating at the Lord's-Table. And therefore there lies a neceſſity upon you to receive the Sacrament, by reaſon of the neceſſity that you have to renew your

your Baptiſmal Vow, unleſs you have been ſo happy as never to have broken it.

You know that the efficacy of all Chriſtian Duties are grounded on your Fidelity, in ſtanding to the Vow which you made in Baptiſm; and you have no better way to teſtifie your Fidelity to that Vow, and that you are Penitent for Tranſgreſſing it, than your worthy Communicating. For this is the beſt Teſt, not only of your Repentance, but alſo of your being a Chriſtian, and of your firm Reſolution ſo to continue.

Now from what is ſaid, you will be able to diſcover how greatly they are miſtaken, who look upon the Lord's-Supper as a thing they may let alone, or partake of, careleſly and indifferently without danger. Whereas it is the moſt eminent part of God's Worſhip, and to which all other parts and inſtances thereof have a peculiar tendency and reſpect: For if you ſtrictly enquire into the firſt Inſtitution

Inſtitution of Publick Prayers and Sermons among Chriſtians, you will find them chiefly deſign'd to produce in them an earneſt longing to be united to Chriſt, and to enſure unto them the benefits of his Sufferings. And it was out of this Conſideration, that ſome have thought all that Preaching to be to no purpoſe, which does not one way or other contribute to the frequent and worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Lord's-Supper: Which is a Duty our Lord made indiſpenſible when he expreſsly commanded, *This do in Remembrance of me*; Which Words, with reſpect to thoſe, to whom they were firſt ſpoken, lay an Injunction upon the Clergy, who are the principal Officers of Religion, to ſee that this Holy Feaſt be carefully provided for, and to take and conſecrate Bread and Wine, and to diſtribute them to ſuch, as piouſly prepare them to receive them worthily at their hands. So that by the whole action being regularly perform'd

form'd both by Clergy and Laity, the Lord's Death may be ſet forth and ſolemnly commemorated with Faith and Thankſgiving.

Chriſt's command for receiving the Sacrament was given to none but ſuch as then were or ſhou'd afterward be his followers: So that none but Chriſtians, or ſuch as devote themſelves to his ſervice by believing in him, are bound to obey and obſerve what he enjoyn'd concerning the Sacrament, or are capable of the benefit of receiving it.

All the duties which Chriſt requires of his Diſciples, except the two Sacraments were one way or other declar'd before his appearance in Humane Nature. *Moſes* and the Prophets had ſufficiently inſtructed the Hebrew Nation in Juſtice and Mercy, which comprehend all homilitick and ſocial vertues, or ſuch as belong to commerce and converſation. And the things written by God's own hand in the two Tables, which their Legiſlator brought

brought down from the Mount, contain'd such an absolute system or summary of all duties both to God and Man, That Christ never went about either to retrench or enlarge, or in any point to alter or correct. And as for the Gentiles, though they were not so happy as to have a revelation, yet by the dictates of Reason, and the natural Notions of Good and Evil implanted in them, and by the precepts of *Adam* traditionally transmitted from Parents to Children, the Gentiles (without Revelation) perform'd the substantial things requir'd in the Law of *Moses*. But neither Jew nor Gentile, as such, did ever receive any command about the Sacrament of Christ's Death, or were ever enjoyn'd any thing concerning it: Because this was a thing appertain'd only to Christians, and was so peculiar to them that it belong'd to none else. For the command concerning the Receiving the Lord's Supper being only given to Christians, none but

but they are under an obligation to obſerve it.

And if you enquire into the nature of this command which Chriſt gave for his laſt Supper, you will find it to differ from all other commands. For as to thoſe precepts in joining Juſtice, Sobriety, Mercy and the like, they have ſomething in nature to prompt you to obſerve and keep them: And they are ſo agreeable to the common light of Mankind that without doing violence to your own faculties, you cannot tranſgreſs them; for a Man can never be guilty of any foul immorality, when he deliberates on what he do's, and guides himſelf by the cool dictates of his natural Conſcience, for whilſt you own the equity of doing as you would be done unto, you can derive a reaſon from within your ſelf, why you ſhou'd have Compaſſion upon others, and Love them as Brethren, and be pitiful and courteous. But as to receiving of the Sacrament you are not mov'd there-

unto

unto by natural Conſcience, or the common ſentiment of humane nature, but by your profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and by that Devotion and obedience which you owe unto its ever Bleſſed and Glorious Author, ſo that your Conſcience does oblige you as a Chriſtian, and not as a Man, to receive the Sacrament. For to do this is commanded only by Chriſt, and conſequently is a duty peculiar to Chriſtians.

And I am of Opinion, that one reaſon why ſo many who call themſelves Chriſtians do neglect the receiving of the Sacrament, is, their guiding themſelves herein by meer natural Conſcience: And becauſe they find that this does not fly in their faces, and accuſe and condemn them for their neglect of the Sacrament, as it does for other offences, they conclude their obligation thereunto is either but very little or none at all.

But if ſuch Men wou'd throughly and wiſely conſider, That to receive the

the Holy Sacrament is the peculiar badge and the peculiar privilege of a Christian, and that there is no other part of Divine Service in which he is so particularly interessed as in this; and that no Religion but this binds its professors to render God thanks for giving his Son to die for them, and to receive his Sacrament in memory of his Death, and of the benefits which are thereby receiv'd, if this were maturely consider'd, every Christian wou'd look upon his receiving the Sacrament as the great and clearest instance of his Devotion and Obedience, and of his Gratitude and Affection to our Glorified Saviour, who has made it the Christians bounden Duty to receive the Sacrament: And such a Duty whereunto he can be sway'd by nothing but his Love and Devotion to Christ who by his precious Blood Shedding has obtain'd innumerable benefits for us; and ordain'd holy Mysteries as pledges of his Love, and for a continual remembrance

brance of his Death, to our great and endleſs comfort.

Had your Deareſt Lord made it only his Requeſt to be remembred of you when he was Dead, and that in the Sacrament you wou'd Commemorate his Death; yet this being his final requeſt, made with his laſt Breath and when he was hard at Death's door, it wou'd be very unkind and diſingenuous in you to omit any opportunity of fulfilling and granting what he then requeſted. But ſeeing the receiving of the Sacrament in remembrance of his Crucifixion is not only his bare requeſt, but expreſs, abſolute command, and ſuch a command as had the nature of a laſt Will, you cannot refuſe to obſerve it without becoming guilty of the moſt provoking Sins of Diſobedience and Ingratitude. The Apoſtle tells you that by receiving the Sacrament, you ſet forth the Lord's Death till he come: which laſt Words ſignifie, That Chriſt's precept in this particular was not like the legal

gal precepts concerning thoſe ritual obſervances which were to vaniſh at the ſet time; but that it was to be obſerv'd in the Church until Chriſt's coming to Judge the World.

And what now can keep you from the Holy Table, unleſs either the difficulty of coming thither worthily, or the danger of coming otherwiſe: This indeed is the common pretence and Apology which is made uſe of by the ſloathful and unbelieving for their not coming to the Sacrament, and may not here be unſeaſonably conſider'd.

And firſt, as to the difficulties of coming worthily to the Sacrament, they cannot be great; and if there be any at all, they ariſe not from the nature of the ordinance, but from our own perverſeneſs and corruptions. For it was Chriſt's ſingular care to make his yoke eaſie and his burden light, and that none of his commands ſhould be grievous, but on the contrary pleaſant and gentle. He remov'd

mov'd the heavy load of Ceremonies under which the Jews had ſo long groan'd; and took the Law of ordinances out of the way, nailing it to his Croſs: And in ſtead thereof he injoyn'd his followers the obſervation of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper. And as none ever complain'd of any hardſhip or uneaſineſs in the former, ſo none have juſt cauſe to grumble at the latter by reaſon of any difficulties that attend it: For if there be any ſuch, they do not ariſe out of the nature of the Duty, but are of our own creating, and ſuch as we have willfully brought upon our ſelves, ſo that that which you make your excuſe is really your Crime, and therefore you ought not to bring it as an Apology for your not doing your Duty, but remove it as the main hindrance that you cannot do it as you ſhou'd.

In the next place be adviſed ſeriouſly to think with your ſelf, whether the pretence of unworthineſs, which you are wont to urge in excuſe for not frequent-

frequenting the Sacrament, be *real* or but *ſeeming*: Whether it be the effect of that modeſt and humble Opinion which you have of your ſelf, or whether there be not ſomething elſe lies at the bottom. And whether your unworthineſs ariſes not from the love you bear your Sins, and from an unwillingneſs you have to part with your Luſts, and to make ſuch a ſolemn Abjuration of them, as the eating and drinking of the Conſecrated Elements imply. For if this be your caſe,---- you have juſt reaſon to refrain from coming to the Lord's-Table, as being evidently unworthy. But then conſider, that this is a wilful unworthineſs, and ſuch as cannot excuſe but aggravate your Offence. For, for any Man to plead that he dares not receive the Sacrament, becauſe he will not forſake his Sins, is to make his fault his Apology, and to cloak one Wickedneſs with another; wherefore if you wou'd either be ſo provident as not to offend, or ſo ingenious as to repent when

when you have offended; if you wou'd be as forward to renew your Covenant with God as you are to break it, and as reſolv'd to reform and amend your Manners, as you have been to debauch and corrupt them, you need no longer abſtain from this great Inſtitution upon the pretence of unworthineſs.

For there is nothing that can render you unfit to celebrate this Federal Rite, but your own Impenitence. So that if you truly repent of your Sins, your Soul will be repleniſht, with all thoſe Vertues which are requiſite to qualifie you for the Euchariſt. For they are all compriz'd in Repentance, which is a Duty of whoſe difficulty none ever complain'd, but ſuch as are unwilling to leave their Vices, and to exerciſe that Faith and Charity, without which you are not only unfit to receive the Sacrament, but to ſay your Prayers, or to perform any holy Office.

But

But ſuppoſe your worthy receiving the Sacrament had more of difficulty in it than really it has, yet this difficulty will wear off with uſe, and the oftener you prepare for the Sacrament and receive it, the worthier you will grow, and the more will your Reſolution of leading a new Life be ſtrengthen'd and confirm'd.

In the very Conſtitution of the Chriſtian Religion, its Heavenly Author took a great care to oblige its Profeſſors to a conſtant and ſolemn Repetition of their good purpoſes. For as at their firſt entrance into Covenant with Chriſt, he bound them openly to renounce the Devil and all his Works, and Religiouſly to promiſe to devote themſelves to his Service; ſo he took care they ſhou'd be often minded of that Covenant, and to renew it at the Lord's-Supper. And ſeeing that on doing this, there depend more Worlds than one; Chriſt thought fit to have the Chriſtians firſt Engagement often repeated, and

his Memory of his firſt purpoſes often refreſh'd. And to this end, he ordain'd his laſt Supper to be reiterated and often repeated; that upon the frequent returns thereof, the Chriſtian might have a ſolemn opportunity to recruit, ſtrengthen, and enforce his firſt Vow of Obedience.

It muſt be confeſs'd, That neither Chriſt nor his Apoſtles have any where defin'd how often the Lord's-Supper is to be Celebrated: But the practice of the Primitive Church (which is the beſt Rule where there is no Precept,) was to receive it frequently. And from ſome Paſſages in the *Acts* of the Apoſtles it ſeems probable, That Chriſtians did Communicate every day, and that they look'd upon the Publick Service to be defective, where the Sacrament was wanting. For the Publick Worſhip did of Old conſiſt of Prayer, Teaching or Catechizing, receiving the Sacrament, and Charitable Contributions; as you may Collect from *Acts* 2. 42.

2. 42. *Where Believers are ſaid to have continued ſtedfaſt in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, and in breaking Bread, and in Prayers.* St. *Luke* ſpeaks of the three Thouſand that receiv'd the Goſpel, and were Baptiz'd, how that they conſtantly attended upon the Catechiſm of the Apoſtles, and in contributing to the ſupply of the Poor, and in Eating the Lord's-Supper, and Praying together.

And the ſame Author Reports, *That the Chriſtians continued daily in the Temple, and breaking Bread from Houſe to Houſe, did eat their Meat with gladneſs of Heart.* The firſt Converts daily aſſembled at the Temple, and having there perform'd their Devotions, they return'd to ſome of the upper Rooms, which are mentioned, *Acts* 1. 13. And there received the Lord's-Supper, and did eat together in a moſt pious and loving manner, and with great Chearfulneſs and Cordial bounty, provided for the Neceſſitous. And we find the ſame Con-

verts coming together, upon the first Day of every Week, to receive the Sacrament, call'd, *Breaking of Bread*, *Acts* 20. 7. And this first Day of the Week, was no doubt the *Status Dies*, or set day in *Pliny*; on which, he tells us, the Christians were wont to meet, to Sing Psalms to Christ as God; and to bind themselves by a Sacrament not to Steal, not to commit Adultery, not to break their word, nor to do any thing that was Evil. And it is most certain, that when ever they came together to perform Divine Service, they clos'd it with the Lord's-Supper. And it was the custom of the Western Churches for a great while to have the Sacrament every day in the Week, and none ever omitted to receive it at the least on the Lord's-Day, after that that Day was appointed to be the constant and perpetual Christian Sabbath.

And in the Eastern Churches, the Lord's-Supper was Solemnized four times

times a Week, beſides Feſtivals. And yet both theſe cuſtoms fell ſhort of the Primitive Practice, which was, as ſome opine, to receive the Sacrament as often as Believers Aſſembled, which was twice a Day.

And now, as for thoſe who do either wholly neglect the Sacrament, or ſeldom approach it, I ſee not how they can excuſe themſelves from being guilty of a wilful rebellion againſt Chriſt, or with what Confidence they can expect he ſhou'd aſſiſt them with his Grace in the way, or Crown them with his Salvation in the end. For by their turning their backs upon this Divine Ordinance, they ſlight that which was appointed for a conveyance of the one, and for a ſeal of the other.

Be advis'd then to ſit down, and with deep ſerioufneſs to conſider the great obligation that lies upon you to receive the Sacrament, and that to do it, is not an arbitrary but an indiſpenſible Duty. For to what end

did Chriſt ordain his laſt Supper, if he has left you at liberty to come to it, or to keep from it as you pleaſe?

Call to mind likewiſe the great benefit which accrews unto you by a due participation of this Divine Banquet; for when you take the care which becomes you, to prepare your ſelf for it, you will find it of mighty advantage in the whole courſe of Religion. For it will confirm you in a ſtate of habitual Piety, and keep your ſervours from waxing cool. It will not ſuffer your good purpoſes to ſlacken, nor your vertuous endeavours to languiſh: But make you grow ſtronger in Religion, by invigorating your good Reſolutions, refreſhing your Vows, repairing your Decays, and making your Graces not only to live but to thrive, and acquire new degrees of ſtrength and activity.

Conſider further, that if you neglect the Sacrament, you neglect that which

which Chriſt has appointed to be the chief Food of your Soul: Which as Food is frequently and thankfully to be received, unleſs you mean to ſtarve your Soul, and by refuſing this Food to provoke God to withdraw his Bleſſing from all other means of your Spiritual growth and nouriſhment.

You cannot be but ſenſible of the great need that you have to grow in the Grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to increaſe in ſtrength, to overcome Temptations; to renew your Obligations to God, and to bind your ſelf faſter to him; to heighten your Love and Gratitude to Chriſt, and to quicken your Delight and Joy in your Saviour. And ſo long as you have need of theſe things, ſo long you have need of the Sacrament which ſerves to all theſe good ends and purpoſes.

When Chriſt reveal'd himſelf to St. *Paul*, and ordain'd him his Miniſter, and inſtructed him what he was

to do in his ſacred Function, he gave him a particular Charge concerning his laſt Supper. And the Apoſtle was ſo careful in obſerving his inſtructions about it, that he declares to the *Corinthians* he deliver'd nothing touching it, but what he had receiv'd from the Lord. So that it was neither *James*, nor *Cephas*, nor any other Perſon, but only Chriſt that taught him the Doctrine of the Sacrament. And you may well imagine that in a matter of ſo great moment and importance, our Lord gave him full and plain directions, and that he punctually obſerv'd them in his Preaching to the *Corinthians* upon this weighty Subject. And thoſe words (I receiv'd of the Lord, that which I alſo deliver'd unto you) imply, that he had been long Preaching to the Converts at *Corinth*, upon the Communion. Which indeed is a Theam that above all others deſerves to be often and clearly handl'd. For, for my own part I am of Opinion, That there

there is no point in Religion that ought to be ſo often inſiſted on and inculcated, as the receiving of the Sacrament; and, That all thoſe Sermons ſignifie not much which do not tend to the diſpoſing of the Audience to partake worthily of this Ordinance; Which no Chriſtian can wilfully omit without being guilty of an hainous Contempt of that which Chriſt appointed for the improving our Graces, and helping us forward in our paſſage to Heaven.

I wou'd have you in the next place to conſider, that nothing more clearly can inform you of the vile nature of Sin, nor more rationally deter you from committing it, than the Sacrament. For therein you have repreſented unto you how deteſtable Sin is unto God, in that nothing cou'd ſatisfie his Juſtice for it but the Blood of his only Son. For when you ſee his bleeding Wounds repreſented by the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine, you

ſee that Sin was the Aſſaſſine, and that which put him to Death. The very thought of which will move a Perſon of any tolerable Senſe and Ingenuity to abhor and make it the object of his implacable indignation.

Beſides, when at this ſacred Solemnity, you receive the Bread and Wine in Remembrance of Chriſt's Death and Sufferings for your Sins, you do not only plainly diſcern that God's Diſpleaſure was ſo exceeding great againſt them, that he would not Seal their forgiveneſs upon any lower Expiation than the Blood of Chriſt; but you are alſo warn'd to flie from Sin as from the face of a Cockatrice, and to avoid it as Hell and Damnation.

Now, by viſible ſigns to have the free Oblation which Chriſt made of himſelf for the Propitiation for Sin, ſolemnly figur'd and ſet forth at the Holy Table, as it plainly ſhews the vile nature of Wickedneſs, ſo it gra-

tiouſly

tiouſly remonſtrates Chriſt's unſpeakable kindneſs in dying to have it pardon'd. And what now can lay upon you a greater Bond to refrain from ſinning than the ſenſe of its Expiation, and what it coſt Chriſt to have it forgiven? And what can more rationally engage you to withſtand the moſt charming Temptations, and importunate Addreſſes, to Sin, than the conſideration of the Sacrifice that was offer'd for its pardon? and the price that was paid to redeem you from its puniſhments? All which you ſee repreſented in the Sacrament.

But ſtill perhaps you ſtand ſhivering under the apprehenſion of eating the Bread and drinking the Cup of the Lord unworthily. And indeed, you have good reaſon to be thus apprehenſive: For the Benefit is great, if with a true penitent Heart and lively Faith, you receive that Holy Sacrament (for then you ſpiritually eat the fleſh of Chriſt and drink his blood;

blood; then you dwell in Christ and Christ in you; you are one with Christ and Christ with you;) so is the danger great if you receive the same unworthily. For then you are guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ your Saviour; you eat and drink your own Damnation, not considering the Lord's Body.

Which Words are Copied from St. *Paul's* Original, wherein he describes the unworthiness whereof the *Corinthian* Converts were guilty in communicating at the Lord's Table. And this their unworthiness consisted in their not discerning the Lord's Body. Now, to discern is an act of the understanding, and the *Corinthians* were said not to discern the Lord's Body, when they did not rightly distinguish of it, or had not a true judgment concerning the nature and signification of the Sacrament. Which error of theirs was occasion'd by having their eyes so intent upon the commemoration of the Passover, that they

wou'd

wou'd ſee nothing of the Body of Chriſt, or of his Death in the Euchariſt. But they retain'd the old Leven of Judaiſm in the new Paſſover of the Lord's Supper. To which they aſſign'd a ſcope and end too mean and unworthy of it. And for this they were ſaid not to diſcern the Lord's Body, and ſo to become guilty of it and his Blood.

Now, there is no Chriſtian can participate of the Sacrament unworthily in the ſame ſence with the *Corinthians*, unleſs they Judaize as they did, and whenſoever the Words of St. *Paul* are apply'd to ſuch Chriſtians as do not Judaize, they are apply'd contrary to the genuine ſcope intended by him.

The unworthy receiving of the Sacrament by the *Corinthians*, which the Apoſtle calls a being *Guilty of the Body and Blood of Chriſt*, he elſewhere calls, *a trampling underfoot the Son of God*, and, *an accounting the Blood of the Covenant wherewith Chriſt was Sancti-*

Sanctified (κοινὸν) *a common, prophane thing.* And in another place he ſaith of thoſe that do thus, *That they Crucifie to themſelves afreſh the Son of God, and put him to an open Shame.* But the Author to the Hebrews ſpeaks not this of all Chriſtians, notwithſtanding that many of them did not walk exactly according to the Evangelick rule, but dealt approbriouſly with Chriſt. But he ſpeaks of thoſe who did relapſe and apoſtatize from Chriſtianity to Judaiſm. To which he obſerving the Converted Jews to be inclinable, he minds them to beware of ſo foul a Crime. Now, when they who profeſs the Goſpel, do ſo far bend to Judaiſm, as to make the Sacrament ſubordinate to the Paſſover, as the *Corinthians* did, and when like them, they own nothing more to be in the Blood of Chriſt than was in the Blood of Lambs, and other Sacrifices, which were meerly commemorative, then they become guilty of the Blood of

of the Lord, and receive the Sacrament unworthily, and ſo incurr a κρῖμα, which our Tranſlation, too ſharply renders Damnation: For according to the Apoſtle it reſpects the bodily puniſhments that were befaln the *Corinthians* for their receiving the Sacrament in the ſence now mention'd. Which puniſhments were ſo far from Damnation taken in the vulgar, rigid ſence, that they are intended to prevent it. For when we are κρινόμενοι judg'd, or puniſh'd, it is, that we ſhou'd not be condemn'd, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. but be corrected and amended, that ſo we may eſcape that Damnation which ſhall fall upon the unreform'd to all Eternity.

It is very obſervable, That God in the beginning of the Moſaic Diſpenſation, did vindicate the honour of the Sabbath, by the Death of him that gather'd ſticks thereon; and the honour of the Worſhip in the Tabernacle, by the Death of *Nadab* and *Abihu*,

Abihu, and the honour of his name, by ſtoning them that Blaſphem'd it. And in like manner God in the beginning of the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, ſet up like monuments of his vengeance in the dreadful deſtruction of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, for the wrong and reproach offer'd to the Holy Ghoſt; in the delivery of ſome into the hands of Satan for their incorrigibleneſs, and in his puniſhments inflicted on the *Corinthians* for their abuſe of the Euchariſt. Yet I am of Opinion, that none of theſe puniſhments reach'd Eternal Damnation, for they ſeem to be only bodily and temporal, and deſign'd to render Men careful to diſcharge their duties aright. And as to the κρῖμα or Damnation, inflicted upon the *Corinthians* for their unworthy participation of the Lord's Sacrament, it was, for ought we find, no more than Bodily Sickneſſes and Death For ſo our own Church ſeems to underſtand it, when with alluſion and reference to St. *Paul's* words,

words, ſhe ſaith, *That they who receive the Sacrament unworthily eat and drink their own Damnation*, that is, they kindle God's Wrath againſt them, and provoke him to plague them with divers diſeaſes and ſundry kinds of Death.

But yet Chriſtians may at this day be deeply guilty of an unworthy receiving the holy memorial of Chriſt's Sacrifice, and conſequently incur the Judgments of God, tho they do not Judaize like the *Corinthians*. And indeed every one is thus guilty who either comes to the Lord's Table unprepar'd, or does not anſwer the intent of coming thither.

Now, all do come unprepar'd who do not before they come, examine themſelves, Whether they repent them truly of their former Sins; ſtedfaſtly purpoſe to lead a new Life: have a lively Faith in God's Mercy thorough Chriſt; a thankful remembrance

brance of his Death; and are in Charity with all Men. These things the Church requires of all who come to the Lord's Supper: And she likewise exhorts them, *To Judge themselves that they be not Judged of the Lord, and to repent them truly of their Sins past, to have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour, to amend their Lives, and to be in perfect Charity with all men,* so shall they be meet partakers of those Holy Mysteries. And they are also to give most hearty thanks to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the Redemption of the World by the Death and Passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ, both God and Man, who to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, hath instituted holy Mysteries as pledges of his love, of which we are to partake with the deepest sence of gratitude and obligation.

St.

St. *Paul* has injoyn'd examination as a proper preparation to the Sacrament, and he expreſſes it by (δοκιμάζειν) a word ſignifying to try and approve. For before you come to your Maſter's Table you are to call your ſelf to account, to take a ſurvey of your paſt Actions and to try them by the rule of the Goſpel, whether or no they have been agreeable thereunto. And this tryal muſt not be ſlight and ſuperficial, but ſtrict and impartial, like that us'd by Metalliſts in the exploration of their Metals, which they caſt into the fire to make a ſeparation of the ſpurious from the genuine. And when you have ſummon'd your paſt Actions before the Tribunal of your Conſcience, and try'd and examin'd them by the rule of the Goſpel, you are next to paſs an impartial ſentence upon them, and ſincerely to repent of the bad, and to give God thanks for enabling you to do any that are not ſo. And this tryal being finiſhed, and if upon it you

you are able to approve your repentance to God and your Conſcience, and find you are peremptorily reſolv'd to compleat the good purpoſes you put on at your coming to the Sacrament, then you may take it to your great and endleſs comfort.

And one Argument for your frequent receiving the Sacrament, is, the conſideration that it puts you upon a frequent examination of your Actions, by which you become acquainted with many errors that otherwiſe wou'd eſcape your notice; for not a few Sins are committed out of heedleſsneſs, which Men never think on after they have committed them, and which without often calling your ſelf to account may be utterly forgotten, and unrepented of. And though the Sins which are heedleſsly committed, perhaps at firſt had in them but little Malice, yet they leave behind them a Malicious Tincture, which infects the Will with thoſe bad inclinati-

inclinations, that insensibly dispose to deliberate Sins. Now, the best way to find out and prevent this mischief, is often to try and examine the quality and condition of your Actions, and not to suffer the evil of them to encrease through meer inconsiderateness. Men are usually toll'd from a lesser to a greater Sin, from a bad thought to a bad word, and from both to a bad action. And the beginnings of Sin being neglected, they may overmaster you before you are aware. Whereas if you make use of frequent examination, you will easily discover your faults, and be able through Christ to remove them before they grow headstrong, and have too far insinuated themselves into your good liking. *A Wound taken in time may easily be cur'd, but if it be neglected it will rankle by degrees into an incurable gangrene.*

There is yet this further benefit in the examination now spoken of, That it

it will ſhew you the difference between Sin and Godlineſs, and enable you to make a clear diſcernment of the pleaſantneſs of the one from the loathſomeneſs of the other; and conſequently bring you to approve of the ways of piety, and to diſlike thoſe of Wickedneſs.

I told you that you are guilty of coming to the Holy Table unworthily, when you are not careful to anſwer the end of your coming thither, that is, when you are not conſtant to the good purpoſes of leading that new life, which is required of all that come to the Holy Communion. For the Church neither invites, nor knowingly admits any to the Communion, who do not reſolve to lead a new life, and from the time of their receiving to obey God's Commandments, and to walk in his ways. And you can want no arguments for doing this, if you conſider the benefit of ſo doing, and the miſchief of doing other

therwiſe. But this being a ſubject yielding ſufficient materials for another——I will let it alone till I have your Command to handle it.

FINIS.